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[6]

To the Editor of the *North Devon Journal*.

THE GUDE OLD TIMES IN WELCOMBE

REVEL ZINDAY

ZUR,—In kintinuashun of me tale I shude zay thit a gude miny stayd about haf a hower pon the green, ware all the nuze of the times wis brot, vur if enny wan wanted to by or zill this wis the place wure twas made noan, or if anny budy wis witched an had got varmint about em if he honely com an told of it thay'd all go—in fact, this was the soal meetin place vur the parrish, and wen twis a fine arternune twis a vury purty site to zee min zot pon the long style and the churchyard wal like a lot of sey gulls pon a rock, and som pon the grass. Moast of the chaps and the yong wimmen started direkly prare wis auver, som aw min turned down auver Butt Park an away down to Kliff, an som wan way an som anether. By vour a'klock moast of the older vokes had paked away hom, vur neerly hivery body had got frends com to spend a cupple ov days wey min. Seven or ayt turned in dru the fute path into the Blue Fox, an som of Mustow men an

The Salamanca Corpus: "The Gude Old Times in Welcombe" (20th August, 1885)

som vrom Harland joined min. They sed that shude like vur taste the hale wile that wis zo neer. Now thare wis allweys a jillesy betwayn Welcombe an Mustow men, but now that zeemed purty soshable, so wan purposed that that shude aich pay vur a pint an hev it drade in a gurt jug cos that thort that shude git moar bear than if that had ait in a lot ov haf pints, but wan or tu hobjected to drink hout ov the same glass way Tom Branton way the bacca joose comin out to boath korners ov es mowth. Tom wis hiley ancid an sed he tuke it as a hinsult to the Hartland men, an he allso sed he beleaved bacca was sent vur the yuse of man, an his brither Dick hofferred to take ether man thare vur a gallin. However, Jinny Trimmer, the landlady, hinturfeered an sed herd hev no fiten thare, and pon a Zinday tu, a purty state of things. Arter a bit Humfrey Burrow paid vur a kwart of ale betwayn Tom an Dick an that got purty well passyfyde, an as Tom pertended to be a bit of a zinger jist to playse en they got en to zing a zong, an he tuke the tinner an Dick a bit of baze of Black Hied Susan, as vollows.—

Awl in the Downs the fleat wis moored,

The streamers waving in the wind,

Wen Black Hied Susan com'd on borde.

Oh! where shall I my tru love find?

Tell me, ye jovial sailors, tell me tru,

If my sweet William sails among the cru.

William, who hi upon the yard,

Rock'd with the billows to an fro,

Soon as her well-known voice he herd,

He sifed an kast his hies below;

The kord slides swiftly thru his glawin hans,

An, quick as litnin, pon the deck he stans.

O Susan, Susan, lovely deer,

My vows shall iver tru remayn;

Let me kiss hoff thet fallin teer,

We only part to mete again.

Change as ye list, ye winds; my heart shall be

The faythfull kompass that still poynts to thee.

The kompeny awl laffed an tacked thare hans, an prayed min a bit so thay got awl rite agen.

Thare was wan tale old Tom was niver tired of tellin thet was ware he got his wive vrom, so durin the avynin thay got en to repayt the storey. Her name was Grace, but he kal'd her Grass, an, ses he, I wis out under Southoll Kliff jist down vrom Hembury palour lukin vur reck, and I glimsed somthing rapt hup in a peece of clath, so I haupened it an there her was, and her haupened her hies an glazed like a pole cat. Now I cant zay twas tru, but he wid tell the tale as hif twas, and he wid tell't enny time vur a peent, or a haf ownse of gude old vinnid roll. As the time went aun som went away an others com'd. Old Will drade minny kwarts of hale vur wan an tether, an kept the skawr behind the dore. Dick Vound sed he hadden had zo much as wis down aginst en, and other sed the same, and thare was a terribel baloo, so old Will agreed to rub it awl out an beegin afresh. Let me tell ee thit this wis a trick they got en to do so many times that bamby he skat abraud an had to layve the place. Arter the row wis auver thay moast aw min zot down agen an zoop'd thare bear an speat an smaoked, an in the dimmet they kained athaurt the tabel wan to the tether an told auver thare hopinyons of the chances of the comin day. Joe Tape rauze to go vur he wis awlways afeerd to be out arter nite, an as he had to pass dru a hude to git hoam, he wis hoff purty quick. Will Trimmer, however, zart as he was, tuke kare to vang his skawr avawr he went. Jist as he wis ago Grace Branton com'd glintin in around the dore a lukin vur Tom, an wanted to naw if he was comin hoam to neert. Well, he sed, he wud go wen he'd had anether peent, as he kal'd it, zo her got in an zot down be his zide, an betwayn min thay manijd to drink 2 or 3 pints arter thet. About 11 they rauze to go. Tom an Grace, an his brither Dick, thay wis got rather bad, but manijd way her help to git down auver Town Hill, an very lucky the watter wis law down to the bottom, an thay got hoam verry well vur they. Som of the rest wis got rather var agaun, and net fit to go hom. Ann Trimmer wis jist come to vet Jeames, an sed wat a shame 'twas vur he to be thare wen hur hadden get a skiddick ov nort vur ait ta-marra. Will Vound an Dick Burrow had let thare heds val down pon the tabel, an wasen fit vur be turned out of dores, an altogether thare wis about a dizen

The Salamanca Corpus: "The Gude Old Times in Welcombe" (20th August, 1885)

left wen twas tweve a'klock. Jinny had gaun to bed hup a hower avaur this, vur her had to git hup harely in the mornin an let Will lie down a bit. Will got tu or dree aw min hup in the straw tallet awver the bru howse, an tu he let go to bed, an the rest he let zit in the kitchen, an now an then wan an anether wid kal vur a haf pint. I shude a sed thit he'd got a small barrel of "mum," or smuggled licker, wich he hid kept awver vrom the autem a purpose vur the time a yur as thay yuse to zay. Wan or tu of the Mustow fellows wis wantin tu make a row, an wance or twice Jinny holled down to ax wat wis the matter. Bamby cockleert wis a com, and Will cald Jinny to git hup. Will, he went an lide down vur tu or dree howers. Jinny got down an got away her work harely in the marning, tended the pegs, an so aun, an got a bit ov brekses vur thay thit wis thare, vur some aw min lived miles away an cuden go hoam, as thay awl wanted to stey to see the fun thit wud be aun the Munday. Jinny hadden got a tabel clath, so her had to take a bed shet, as wan that wis thare told me hissell. I muss now tell ee wat was to be card aun durin the day.

Rasslin wis allways the mayn thing, an tuke place in the Bell plat, kald so cause they sed the bells wis cast thare. Thare wis skitlen to the back of the howse, cock fitin hup in the tallet awver the bru howse, klimmin the graysey poal vur a leg ov mutton, racing vur a gown for the old wimmen, an donkey racin vur boys. Some sed the mutton wis a peece of Mr. Hockrige's sheep thit wis kride the day avaur. Thare wis a plenty ov buns an sweetmaits vur thay thit had got the munny. About 7 a'clock Jinny call'd awl her lodgers, so arter raimin a bit thay got hup an had thare brekses, an prepared vur wat wis comin aun. About 11 the vokes begun to arrive, an a rasslin match wis arranged betwayn Will Hissett an Jan Piper, so arter thare wis about dree hundred got in the field vur wich thay payd tuppence aich, thay brort out the prizes an put min top of a tabel wan zide ov the ring. Thare wis tu zilver spunes, and a nu hatt, and siverall poket hankichers—thay cal'd it Ingy silk, and som munny, but thay didden put thet pon the tabel. It mite be axed ware thay got it all. The farmers wud join together an make hup wat they kal'd stakes. Wat thay named it that vor I dunnow. I yuse to wonder how gude farmers an gentelmen as thay wis thort to be, and thit wudden like vur hev thare own legs a kicked, shude delite in seein others du it, but I spose theyd bin brort up to it, and tuke it as a good passtime. Vur me own pairt I niver did hinjoy it, an wen I shude yer the kicks agin wan tether's legs, twud make me shidder, but the oldr vokes only laffed at

The Salamanca Corpus: "The Gude Old Times in Welcombe" (20th August, 1885)

it. Pon this very day thare wis a littel maid tuke thare by her partens, an wen her zeed wan of the men kick anether an made the blid rin down his leg so thit thay had to take en out vur tend his wound like Ive rayd about in battels, this cheeld cride out wey feer. Her mother tuke her back behind, and smacked her vor it, an tuke her in agen, an made her zit still. Well, as I sed, the fust match was betwayn Will Hissett an Jan Piper, or Welcombe an Kilkeden, an was vur a hatt. Thay playd hup a dizen round avaur ether wan cude draw, but ta last Piper begun to git wangery an auver he went zmack. His legs mut hev bin in a hawful state vur he'd had som dridful blaws, an wan time Will missed en an kiked hoff is shu an they sed he went za hi as the tower. Arter this moast ov min went outside ware the tither sprees wis aun. Wimmin runnin, an so on; Grace Sandercock got the fust prise, and others thit I cant stay to tell'ee about got sum. Thare wis minny uther things to vill hup the time avaur rasslin begun agen by tu o'klok. An by thet time thare wis hunderds moar a com'd, vur the varmers awl gied thare prentises a haf holladay, and som ov min widden stap vur ait no dinner but wid paur a crist ov burd into thare poket an bee hoff. Dick Branton an Nanny started arter dinner an got hup in Town Hill wen he sed hid furgot tu change his shurt, an if hid got to feert twud look bad to sea a baisly wan, an so he went rite back tu Southole agen vur tu change en.

Now I must kut me story short,
Vur I kant tell't za quick's I thort.

I shude a sed thit thare wis a barrel uv beer out in the bell plat ware the rasslin was, an thit ivery wan who got a prise must pay doun a sartin sum tu be drink't amangst the kompany vur the gude uv the houze as they used to kal't. Be the time named thare wis hup zix or zeven hunderd vokes a dringed into the feeld. Som aw min com'd menny milse vrom awl the parrishes round, som wis dressd like ladys and gentilmen, an aiven the pore maydens about the place wis awl tiddivated purty tidey. Som sot down, but a lot had to stan behind vur to sea wat wis duin, wile som wud rucky down wen they got tierd way standin, but a lot of the chaps wud git on the hege an the churchyard wal. Wen time wis kald Will Hissett stude in the ring as the champyon. The nex prise wis the silver spunes, an I daresay he thort he shude like to ware his nue hatt to Church the nex Zinday way the spunes sticked inside the band, wich they allways yused vur to du, but

The Salamanca Corpus: "The Gude Old Times in Welcombe" (20th August, 1885)

has you'll yer he hadden got the chance. Wen he'd stude thare a vu minnets, a stranger comed vusslin vore drue the kroud. He wis a gurt gawkin lukin feller, an he stude in an shaked hans way Will wich wis aykil to sayin "I'll tak'ee hup." So, arter he'd tuked hoff his things, hat it thay gose like tu wile baysts. The man's name wis Penvound and he comid vrum vurder doun thin Straten. Thay played twe or dree rounds avaur enny wan cude tel wich wis best man; an aw! thay kickd wan the tether moast dredful. About the fourth round Penvound let go to Will's leg, an doun he vald slap bang like a bulluk. Som aw min cride out way feer, an thort hee wis ded, but thay took en hup an car'd en out, an he crinted moast dredful vrom the payn in is leg, an George Hambly as luk wud hev it wis thare, so he tide hup the wound, an thay got en hoam to baid, an he diden get out vur ware his hatt tu Church vur som time. Tho is leg wassen brauk thay said twas wuss, an he wis lame to the day ov is deth. I kant stay fur tell'ee much moar now, but I may jist say thit the tither prises wis played vor be various peeple, an the other amoosements wis car'd on in turn awl the arternune. Lots wis drunk. Fitin and swarin wis very ginneral. Will Gay who thay sed wis the verry daps ov his fathir wis duin the moast hinnicent soart of thing. He'd cindiddled a vu pense hout of the vokes vur to gie the boys a chance, so he wis gittin min to rin outside the Church Grean vur a vu copirs. Thay made hup a awful stewer, but that didden hurt noebody. Not long arter this the revels begind to vall away to nort, cumpaired way wat it was, tho they keep it hup in som fashen till about the yer 1850. Zune arter the time I've tould'ee about the Methody's begun to com roun, an som of the ruffest in the plase went arter min, an awltho some sarved min bad an wud yen stoans to min, thare wis others thit wid defend min. Mr. Littlejohns, a man I nawd so well as I did me awn fathir, wis put in jayl vur praychin, but I shude tell'ee thit thare comin about wis the dith blaw tu the revels, an the passon wan Zindey spauk agin min, an zed, "The men thit hev turn'd the world hupside be com hither awlso." A chapple wis put hup about 50 yers ago, an dru the hefforts ov Mr. Bartlett a Zindy skule wis startid, and thay gather'd the boys together and tayched min to rayd thare buke, wich he wed wis better thin vor min to be birdnestin and staylin appels. I muss now tell'ee in konklushen thit the Zinday skule hanniversary is pon the revel day an the Munday arter. Mr. Bartlett yused tu hev awl the childern duwn in his feeld tu tay, an I've been thare minny times mesel. He'd ded an gaun, but thare's a tay the zame, for Mr. How, of Torrinton giveth it tu the childrn, an this very yer, pon



The Salamanca Corpus: "The Gude Old Times in Welcombe" (20th August, 1885)

Trinity Munday, 245 had tay together, wich yer humbel sarvint thinkth is a himprovement pon the owld days. Let me tell'ee there's no Blue Fox now. Twis shet hup 25 yers ago, the plase is quite chenged; I doant zay thare's no bad vokes yer, but you niver yer min sware like thay du in moar sivelised plases. I think zur, the so var as this place is consarned theyse times be bettir thin the vormer wens, and must konklude me long lettir thankin you vur printin it.

Now sose, I begs to bid'ee all farewell,
But praps thare mite be som wuld like to now,
Thet I shal hev som other tales tu tell,
If all gothe rite vur 'bout dree weeks or zo.

Yours very truly,

R. GILES

Welcombe, August 17, 1885.

